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EDITORIAL.

EDITORS, E. D. COPE AND J. S. KINGSLEY.

THE fortieth meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science was held at Washington, between August 17th and 25th, inclusive. It was a successful and enjoyable occasion, and the membership present exceeded 800. Representatives from almost all parts of the country, including the Pacific coast, were present. The papers read were generally of a high order of merit. A noticeable feature was the large number of new specialists who appeared, especially in the Biological and Geological Sections, an indication of increased activity in these fields, due in the main to the good work which has been going on in our universities. The overflow of entomological papers was large enough to give the Entomological Club plenty to do, and a good many geological papers went over to the Geological Society of America, whose meetings overlapped those of the American Association. The address of the retiring president, Professor George L. Goodale, on the possibilities of the introduction and cultivation of plants, now only known in the wild state, which shall be of utility to man, was of wide interest. The addresses of the vice presidents were as various as usual. That of the president of the Geological Section was technical, while that of the president of the Biological Section was didactic. Professor Prescott made an excellent presiding officer. Excursions were not allowed to interfere with the work of the association, and they were the more enjoyable on that account. The closing meeting, on the evening of the 25th, was an occasion of much hilarity. Not the least important contribution to this feeling was the address of a youth who presented the association with an invitation to hold the meeting of 1893 at Chicago, during the exposition. In well-considered language the association was asked to contribute its mite to one of the vast aggregate of congresses to be held there, and thus take part in the rejuvenation of the human race which it was anticipated would date from that event. Rochester was selected as the place of meeting for 1892.

—THE American Society of Geologists met on August 24th and 25th, during the meeting of the American Association in the
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same building (the Columbian University), in Washington. As the 24th was occupied by the association in excursions, the meeting on the 24th was devoted to papers by foreign members who had arrived with the intention of attending the International Congress. These were Steinmann and Rothpletz, of Germany ; Harker and Gregory, of England ; Schmidt, Krassnow, and Pavlow, of Russia ; De Geer, of Sweden ; and Stephanescu, of Roumania. Some of these will appear in future numbers of the *NATURALIST*. The most important papers contributed by American members were those of President T. C. Chamberlin, Mr. R. T. Hill, and Mr. W. J. McGee. The society was the recipient of papers suitable for the International Congress, after it was decided to restrict the work of the latter body to discussion of definite questions only. Professor Stevenson, of New York, presided over the sessions with his usual ability, and Mr. McGee made an admirable secretary.

—THE fifth meeting of the International Congress of Geologists met at Washington from August 26th to September 1st, inclusive. The attendance from foreign countries was larger than was anticipated, although not so large as the list published by the reception committee would indicate. The foreign members were distributed as follows: Austria-Hungary, 2 ; Belgium, 4 ; Canada, 3 ; France, 3 ; Germany, 17 ; Great Britain, 6 ; Mexico, 3 ; Norway, 1 ; Roumania, 2 ; Russia, 4 ; Sweden, 4 ; Switzerland, 2 ; total, 51. Several members were accompanied by ladies ; Great Britain sent 2 ; Roumania, 2 ; and Russia, 1 ; total, 56. With some names not classified above, the total number present was about 65. The language selected for the conduct of the affairs of the congress was English, although French has been hitherto universally employed. This was due to the fact that the members of the U. S. Geological Survey, who had assumed the management of the congress, could neither speak French nor understand it when spoken.

Professor Newberry, the acting president, was ill, and unable to attend, so that his place was occupied successively by the first vice president, Professor Jos. Le Conte, and Professors Von Zittel of Munich, and Gaudry of Paris. The honorary presidents were Professors J. D. Dana and James Hall. The second and third vice presidents were Maj. J. W. Powell and Mr. Raphael Pumpelly.

The discussions as arranged by the committee of management had reference, 1st, to the general principles of stratigraphic correlation ; 2d, to the system of colors for geologic maps ; and 3d, to the system of classifications of the Plistocene deposits. The necessity for discussion of the principles of correlation was not very apparent, since those principles are well known and generally adopted. The discussion, however, brought out some consideration of intercontinental and transcontinental applications of these principles, which were entirely appropriate to an international congress. Much of the discussion, however, bore on the question as stated, and was either inappropriate or local in its bearings. The discussion on the classification of the Plistocene was based on two systems, one offered by Mr. McGee and the other by President Chamberlin. Both are physical systems, and not historical, as was observed by various gentlemen who took part in the discussion. They were, however, of universal application, and many interesting facts were brought out, especially with reference to the existence or not of an interglacial warm climate on both hemispheres.

The congress was entertained by receptions at the Arlington Hotel, the U. S. National Museum, and the private houses of Messrs. Thomas Wilson and S. F. Emmons. Nearly all the foreign members took part in the excursion to the Rocky Mountains, Grand Canyon of the Colorado, and Yellowstone Park, which left Washington, September 2d, from which they are expected to return about September 25th. Before the meeting of the congress many of the members visited the paleontological collections at New Haven and Princeton, and during the congress, the collection of Prof. Cope at Philadelphia. Some interesting specimens from New Haven were exhibited in the U. S. National Museum.

The congress was overtaken at its opening by a spell of hot weather, which constituted a drawback to the enjoyment of some of the members. As an educator to the younger American geologists it was a successful occasion. We can point out some material defects of management which would not have occurred had the meeting been held in Philadelphia, as originally intended ; but we postpone this for another occasion.